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DISTANCE TRAVELLED.				Miles.
Kendall River to Coast, 64 Miles.				
May 2 and 3	..	25	Brought forward	436
3 " 4	..	27.5	May 21 and 22	.. 19.75
4 " 5	..	23	22 " 23	.. 23.50
5 " 6	..	20.5	23 " 24	.. 31
6 " 7	..	19.75	24 " 25	.. 23
7 " 8	..	19.5	25 " 26	.. 18.75
8 " 9	..	— stormy.	26 " 27	.. 23.25
9 " 10	..	21.5	27 " 28	.. 23
10 " 11	..	21.5	28 " 29	.. 24.5
11 " 12	..	— stormy.	29 " 30	.. 21
12 " 13	..	19.5	30 " 31	.. 16.5
13 " 14	..	20.25	31 " 1 June	21
14 " 15	..	21	June 1 " 2	.. 25.5
15 " 16	..	10.50 thick snow	2 " 3	.. 23
16 " 17	..	26.75	3 " 4	.. 19.5
17 " 18	..	25.5	4 " 5	.. — did not travel.
18 " 19	..	{ 5 along coast.	5 to 10	.. 75
		{ 20 inland.		
19 " 20	..	23	Geograph. miles	.. 824.25
20 " 21	..	22.25	English miles	.. 942
Carried forward 436				

### V.—Recent *Explorations along the South and East Coast of Victoria Land.* By Dr. JOHN RAE.

Communicated by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Read April 5, 1852.

To Archibald Barclay, Esq., Secretary to the Hudson's Bay Company.

Fort Simpson, 27th September, 1851.

SIR,—Having in my report, dated at the Kendall River on the 10th June, and addressed to Sir George Simpson, communicated the details and result of my spring journey over the ice and snow along the Arctic shores, I have now the honour to acquaint you that the boat expedition under my command, which visited the Polar Sea this summer, arrived here yesterday in safety, but I regret to say without having gained any information of Sir J. Franklin and party.

On the 13th June, exactly three days after my return from the coast, the boats from Fort Confidence\* joined me at the Kendall river, having made a most expeditious trip across, of only 6½ days.

On the 15th we ran down to the confluence of the Kendall and Coppermine rivers, the water being so high in the former that, although we had on board full cargoes, we did not touch a stone. The latter stream was still covered with ice, which did not break up until the 18th.

\* East end of Great Bear Lake.—Ed.

About noon on the 20th, there being a clear passage, we commenced the descent of the river, more for the purpose of getting to better hunting-grounds than for any other object, as the season was still too early for the ice on the coast to be broken up. In the evening we encamped at the great bend of the river, about 7 miles above the first rapid. Here we remained 2 days, during which 6 deer and 4 musk cattle were shot; the greater part of their flesh was partially dried over a fire for future use.

*23rd June.*—In the evening we ran down to the rapid, which looked so formidable, owing to the great height of the water, that the steersmen, although daring almost to recklessness, would not venture to run the boats down, even without their cargoes.

Consequently, next day a portage was made, and the boats launched over a point of rocks. Finding some of the rapids a few miles farther down so very rough, that notwithstanding the excellent qualities of our boats they shipped much water, we encamped again until the river should subside a little, before passing through the more dangerous portions of the stream.

During our stay of 4 days the diminution was so trifling that, my patience being exhausted, we continued our voyage. At every rapid, notwithstanding the care and coolness of the steersmen, much water was shipped, and when we came to the Escape Rapid we found the rock that had endangered the safety of Simpson's boat in 1838 was completely hid from view, showing thereby that the height of water was considerably greater now than at that period; we passed down in safety, but the boats were nearly half filled.

In the evening we encamped at the Bloody Fall, and had not been there more than 15 minutes when 40 salmon and whitefish were taken in a net set in the eddy below the fall.

Having deposited a bag of pemmican and a bale of dry meat, "en cache," on a small island, we proceeded to the mouth of the river, near which we remained for some time, killing deer, fish, and geese, enough to support the party. The weather was extremely beautiful, and the ice along shore wasted fast under the influence of the sun's rays.

On the 5th July a slight breeze from the S. opened a narrow channel along shore to the E., of which immediate advantage was taken, and we gained 22 miles before evening, when our progress was arrested by the fixed ice.

It had been my intention to follow the coast to Cape Krusenstern, and from thence cross over to Wollaston Land, but as the ice, except in Back's Inlet, was still strong and solid to the beach in that direction, I deemed it best to take advantage of the first favourable open water.

Our passage alongshore was slow and difficult. In many

places the ice lay against the rocks, and compelled us to make portages, which, although an arduous duty to those unaccustomed to it, gave my men comparatively little annoyance.

On the morning of the 16th of July we rounded Cape Barrow amidst torrents of rain. From the high rocks, as soon as the weather cleared, a good view to the eastward across Coronation Gulf was obtained; the prospect was far from promising, the whole sea, as far as it was visible, being covered with an unbroken sheet of ice, on which a great many seals were seen. Our day's voyage terminated within 3 miles of Detention Harbour, which is separated from Inman Harbour, on the W. side of the Cape, by an isthmus not more than 200 yards wide.

The passage across the gulf was very slow. We had to make the complete circuit of Moore Bay, and it was not until the 20th that we reached Walker Bay, having found a narrow but very crooked lane of open water among the Wilmot Group, N. of Marcet Island.

On the 22nd a fresh breeze from the S.E. opened a channel across Riley Bay to Cape Flinders, of which we immediately availed ourselves. When near the Cape we had an interview with three Esquimaux, and others were seen on a neighbouring island. These people appeared to have been poorly fed, as they were much leaner than Esquimaux generally are; they had never been in communication with white people before, and were at first much alarmed, but we very soon gained their complete confidence.

We arrived at Cape Alexander on the 24th, being two days earlier than Dease and Simpson in 1839.

The ice in the strait was still unbroken, but along-shore eastward, as far as visible, there was an open passage of a mile or more in width; this, however, was of little advantage, as my intention was to cross from our present position to Victoria Land, the strait being here narrower than at any other point.

Had geographical discovery been the object of the expedition, I would have followed the coast eastward to Simpson Strait, and then crossed over towards Cape Franklin. This course, however, would have been a deviation from the route I had marked out, and would have exposed me to the charge of having lost sight of the duty committed to me.

The ice having broken up on the 27th, we pushed our way among the loose pieces to the nearest of the Finlayson Islands, and had afterwards little difficulty in reaching the one nearest to Victoria Land, on which we passed the night, as the ice was again in our way. A gale of N.W. wind having, during the next night and morning, dispersed the ice, we made our way to a point equidistant from our resting-place and the head of Cambridge Bay.

Here we found shelter in a creek, the entrance to which swarmed with salmon, and 90 were caught by running a net across the stream; few of these were large, the average weight being about 5lbs., and the greater number of them, having spawned, were in poor condition.

Late on the night of the 29th, we arrived at the north-eastern extremity of the bay, as laid down in the charts by Dease and Simpson; but I found that it extended several miles farther, taking a bend to the westward and forming an excellent harbour, with a sufficient depth of water for vessels drawing upwards of 24 feet, and having good holding-ground of sand or mud. Into the W. side of this harbour a rapid river, about 50 yards broad, of beautifully clear water, empties itself. This stream flows from a lake of considerable extent some miles inland, and appears to be a favourite resort of the natives, judging by the numerous stone-marks and several "caches" of provisions, clothing, &c., deposited on its banks. Doubtless this is an excellent fishing station immediately after the breaking up of the ice, as many salmon were still seen sporting in the transparent waters in the vicinity.

During the next two days a gale from the W. and W.N.W. made so much havoc among the ice that there was a clear passage open to the E. point of the bay; and on the 1st of August, 11h. A.M., the wind being still fair and more moderate, we started, but had not been off more than ten minutes when it chopped round directly in our teeth and blew a gale, against which, having lowered the masts and sails, we had great trouble in making way with the oars. At length we reached a small island in the bay; from thence, by plying to windward, under close-reefed sails, at about 4 P.M., we doubled the point. Our course being now E. the wind was fair, and, aided by the flood-tide, an hour's sailing brought us to Cape Colborne, where the examination of untraced coast commenced.

The shores at Cape Colborne are high and steep, but became gradually lower as we sailed eastward. When 7 miles E. of the Cape we landed to cook supper; after 45 minutes' stay we were again under sail, and very soon came to the W. point of a bay running up to the northward. This bay was found to be 8 miles wide, and apparently about 6 miles deep. Its eastern shore is low, and could not have been seen by Dease and Simpson from any point in their route; no doubt some high ground I saw inland was mistaken by them for the boundary of the coast. I have, therefore, in the rough chart which accompanies this report, taken the liberty of transferring the name of Point Back to the W. point of the Bay, whilst the Bay itself is called Anderson Bay, in honour of the Right Rev. the Bishop of Rupert's Land.

The weather remaining fine and the wind fair, we continued

under sail all night, our course being slightly to the southward of E. The shore was low, indented with small bays, and having several islets lying near it.

After advancing nearly 16 miles we arrived at a bay of considerable extent, across which, as the breeze freshened, we ran rapidly. The farthest visible point bore E. (true); and the bay being 11 miles wide, we were about 2 hours in crossing. Here I was surprised to find the flood-tide coming from the eastward, as hitherto it had flowed from the opposite direction. To this bay the name of Parker was given. Its W. point I named Sturt, after the celebrated Australian traveller; and its eastern boundary received the appellation of Macready, in honour of the distinguished tragedian. When we had sailed nearly 3 miles farther, we put on shore for breakfast. During our stay, high land, having the appearance of a large island, was observed through the haze, bearing E. by S., and apparently about 18 miles distant. Fuel being extremely scarce, we were detained  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hour here.

Immediately after getting under weigh again, we commenced the examination of a curiously-shaped bay, having an island 2 miles in extent near its centre, and being divided into two narrow inlets near its head, by a long projecting point. The most northerly of these inlets was admirably sheltered; but I cannot speak with confidence of the depth of water, as I did not examine it closely. The name of Stromness was bestowed on this bay.

Some time having been spent in examining the shore and taking bearings, it was 10h. 45m. A.M. when we passed the E. boundary of the bay, a low stony point, fronted with limestone rocks a few feet in height, which was named Kean Point.

The coast now turned to the N.E.; and having a single-reef breeze right aft, with smooth water, the little boats ran along swiftly.

About noon we passed among a cluster of small islands, in the channels between which the flood ran strong against us. I landed on one of these islands, and observed the latitude to be  $68^{\circ} 52' 21''$  N.; the variation  $68^{\circ} 30'$  E.

The island already mentioned as having been seen from Point Macready was now not more than 10 miles distant. It appeared to be fully 15 miles in extent, high towards either end, but low in the middle. It was called *Lind*, in honour of one whose sweetness of voice and noble generosity have been the theme of every tongue.

The general trending of the shore was still N.E., but its outline was irregular, being broken into strangely-shaped bays and points. Having advanced 13 miles, we came to a point where the coast turned abruptly to the N. Tracing it for 8 miles, we found ourselves near to what looked like the head of a bay; but on closer

examination a very narrow channel leading northward was discovered. It was so completely blocked up with ice as to be un-navigable.

Altering our course to S.S.E., we ran round the S. end of Taylor Island, so named as a tribute of respect to the memory of the late much-regretted President of the United States. We here got among very heavy and closely-packed ice, which we anticipated from having some hours before seen several very large floes aground in 5 fathoms water. The ebb-tide being strong in our favour, we made good progress to the north-eastward, running some risk occasionally of being nipped between the floating and grounded masses.

About 8 P.M. we landed for a short time, and then pushed on again, and at 11h. 40m. on the 2nd August put on shore for the night under shelter of the most easterly point of the island, on the outer extremity of which the ice was forced up so as to form an insurmountable barrier to further advance. The place at which we landed and its neighbourhood were barren in the extreme. Scarcely a vestige of vegetation, and not a bit of drift-wood, were to be seen; nothing but a level tract of light grey coloured limestone, which had been forced up in immense blocks close to the shore by the pressure of the ice. The stone was in many places covered with minute brown-coloured crystals.

Next day our position was ascertained by observation to be in latitude  $69^{\circ} 12' 20''$  N., longitude by chronometer  $101^{\circ} 58' 15''$  W. The variation of the compass was found to be  $58^{\circ} 58'$  E.; but as the needle was extremely sluggish, and evidently acted upon by local attraction, little reliance could be placed upon it.

It will be observed that we had been extremely fortunate, and had made an excellent run of more than 100 miles without a single stoppage except the detention requisite for cooking.

During the whole of the 3rd August there was a gale from N., with heavy squalls and showers of sleet and snow. In the intervals between the showers, land could be seen to the N.W. by N., and N.E. (true), apparently 12 to 15 miles distant; but the horizon was never sufficiently clear to permit a distinct view of it.

The weather on the 4th continued much the same; but about 11h. A.M. the wind fell a little, and having shifted a point or two to the westward, a lane of water along shore was opened, up which we pulled to the N.W., until we doubled some reefs which stretched out a few miles to seaward. Having rounded these, we got into open water, set close-reefed sails, and stood towards land, close hauled on the starboard tack, steering W.S.W. There was an ugly chopping sea running, but the boats behaved admirably; and a run of little more than five miles brought us to the shore.

The wind again set in from the N., increasing to a perfect gale ; and although we could gain ground pretty fast by plying to windward, our slightly-built craft strained so much in the heavy seas that frequently washed over us—in fact, one of the boats had a plank split—that we lowered sails on gaining a partial shelter from the land, and after a tough pull of two miles, during which we were sometimes barely able to hold our ground, we entered a snug cove, and secured our boats.

*August 5.*—The weather was still stormy, and finding that no headway could be made with the oars, our sails were again set, and we turned up to windward until the gale became too violent for our most reduced canvas ; there was consequently no help for it but to put ashore, which we did on the north side of a long narrow bay, having gained about 6 miles. Satisfactory observations were here obtained, giving latitude  $69^{\circ} 20' 55''$  N., longitude by chronometer  $102^{\circ} 30' 2''$  W., and variation  $63^{\circ} 56'$  E.

On the 6th we could not start until the evening, and then advanced only 8 miles, at first to the N. by E., and afterwards to the W.N.W., passing some limestone cliffs of considerable altitude faced with deep snow banks.

A very thick and cold fog coming on, which encrusted every article with ice, we landed, and were soon snug in our tents. Here a quantity of drift wood was found, being the first we had seen of any size since leaving Cape Alexander. The wood was poplar, and must have grown on the banks of the Mackenzie, or some of the rivers near it.

The well-marked cape on which we now were was named in honour of the Princess Royal. It presents a precipitous front to the E. and N.E.

Next day being clear and fine, observations were obtained, which gave the latitude  $69^{\circ} 27' 6''$  N., longitude by chronometer  $102^{\circ} 27' 12''$  W., and variation  $72^{\circ} 30'$  E. The bearings of several islands and points in sight having been taken, we pulled out from shore due north, towards the highest visible land, passing between two islets near the shore. We were 7 hours crossing, the distance being fully 20 miles, and the current during the greater part of the time against us. Soundings were taken regularly, the greatest depth being 22 fathoms on a bottom of mud.

Our landing place was a small point in a bay, on the shore of which, about a mile inland, were a cliff and some high ground, from which I had a good view of surrounding objects. To the S.E. there was a small peninsula a few miles in extent, connected with the shore by a very narrow ridge. Off the point west of us there was a number of low stony islands or reefs extending to the southward 4 or 5 miles : beyond this, in the same direction, was an opening in which no land was visible. Directing our course, under sail,



towards this apparent passage, we passed between the most northerly of the reefs above-mentioned and the shore, through a narrow channel, having barely sufficient depth of water for our boats, and continued advancing in the same direction until it fell calm at 2 h. 30 m. A.M. on the 8th, when we landed on a small island at the entrance of a narrow inlet running N. Here we passed the remainder of the night.

It was past 7 next morning before we were under weigh again, and as there was no wind, we pulled up the inlet with the hope that it might prove to be a passage northward, but in this we were disappointed. When half a league from the head of the inlet we landed, and ascertained our position by very excellent observations to be in latitude  $69^{\circ} 56' 2''$  N., longitude by chronometer  $102^{\circ} 30' 46''$  W. After this we pulled down to the southward, and put ashore on the west point of the inlet to pick up a piece of pine, the dimensions of which were 18 feet long by 10 inches diameter. As the wood was straight-grained and free from knots, it had doubtless been carried to the sea by some stream far to the west of the Coppermine. The wood being perfectly dry and not at all decayed, furnished us with sufficient fire-wood for several days' consumption.

From some elevated ground in the vicinity land was seen from W. to the S.S.W., and as there were no indications of Esquimaux having recently visited the several points we touched at, and no signs whatever of Europeans having ever been on this coast, I considered that it would be a waste of time to examine the bay more closely. Having pushed off, we took a direct course towards the small peninsula, mentioned as having been seen the day before.

Here we landed at 9 h. 25 m. P.M. Several snow owls (*Stryx nicta*) were seen, and I may add, that these beautiful birds were to be found all along the shore of Victoria Land, wherever there were any elevated spots of ground or large stones for them to perch upon.

A light breeze of north wind that had prevailed for some time having increased in force, we again started and stood to the eastward under sail across a deep bay, with the ebb tide strong in our favour, until we passed between two small islands, where we were met by the flood. In 2 hours, having run between 7 and 8 miles, we were abreast of the east point of the bay. As we advanced, turning slightly to the northward of E., we passed two more bays of small size. On the farthest point of the most easterly one the ice lay fast aground and too closely packed to permit a passage: we consequently landed under the lee of the point at half-past 3 A.M. of the 9th.

*August 9.*—There was a gale of wind from N.N.E. during the

greater part of the day, with a temperature of  $+ 30$ . The weather was cloudy, but at noon a glimpse of the sun allowed me to obtain the latitude  $69^{\circ} 41' 2''$  N. The weather in the evening being fine we pushed off, and, by pulling and poling, forced our way upwards of a league northward, when all further efforts to proceed proved fruitless.

The prevalence of north-easterly winds during the remainder of our stay here kept the ice close to the shore; and in the offing to the eastward, nothing but large pieces of very heavy ice, thrown up in great confusion, was to be seen. By observation our latitude was  $69^{\circ} 42' 45''$  N., longitude by chronometer  $101^{\circ} 23' 42''$  W. The compass was here perfectly useless, being acted upon, I suspect, by the large quantities of pyrites that were strewn along the beach.

On the 12th, finding that there was little or no prospect of change in the wind, preparations were made for a foot journey of a week's duration to the northward. Leaving therefore directions that one of the boats should follow us along shore if the ice cleared away, I started a short time before noon in company with three men, and, as we trusted to killing both deer and geese on our way, we carried with us provisions for only four days.

Hoping to avoid the sharp and rugged limestone débris with which the coast was lined, we at first kept some miles inland, but with trifling advantage, as the country was intersected with lakes, which obliged us to make long détours. Nor was the ground much more favourable for travelling than that nearer the beach; being, in fact, as bad as it could be, in proof of which I may mention that, in two hours, a pair of new mocassins with thick, undressed buffalo-skin soles, and stout duffle socks, were completely worn out, and before the day's journey was half done every step I took was marked with blood.

We gained a direct distance of 17 miles after a walk of 24 hours, and bivouacked near the shore. Although we had passed a good many fine pieces of drift-wood some time before, here we had some difficulty to collect enough to boil the kettle.

Opposite our resting-place, and not far from shore, was an island some miles in extent, to which I gave the name of Halkett.

Next morning, when we had travelled 3 miles northward, a large piece of wood was found, very opportunely about breakfast time. As the travelling continued as bad as ever, and as the whole party were more or less foot sore, I resolved to remain here to obtain observations, notwithstanding which two of my men pushed on 10 miles to the N., and the other went to kill deer.

The results of my observations were lat.  $70^{\circ} 2' 36''$  N., long.  $101^{\circ} 24' 47''$  W., and variation  $89^{\circ} 30'$  E. The compass tra-

versed here much more freely than it had done for some time past, which may possibly be accounted for by there being no appearance of iron in the vicinity.

In the evening the men returned rather lame, having, as I just stated, walked 10 miles, <sup>as</sup> nearly as I could estimate by the time they had been absent. Their view northward was limited to 7 miles, and the whole shore presented the same dreary, uninteresting aspect, being low, flat, and stony. To the farthest point seen I gave the name of Pelly, in honour of Sir J. H. Pelly, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Next morning we commenced our return, and reached the boats in 8½ hours. During this short journey many deer were seen, and at least half a dozen might have been shot had it been necessary, but we killed only two. These were in high condition.

The people left with the boats had, according to my orders, erected a couple of stone cairns. Near the summit of one of them a short note of the object and proceedings of the expedition was deposited.

On the 15th the wind continued to blow most obstinately from the N.N.E., and as our boats were now in a dangerous position should the wind shift more to the eastward, I determined to run back a few miles to a safer harbour, where we could wait any favourable change in the wind and ice, and also, if an opportunity offered, make an attempt, by getting under the lee of Admiralty Island, to cross over towards Sir James Ross's Point Franklin, only 40 miles distant.

I omitted to notice that this island had been observed and bearings taken of it on the 8th of August. Having taken possession of our discoveries in the name of her Majesty Queen Victoria, we started, but a little before noon the breeze increased to a gale, shifting two points more easterly, and there being a great accumulation of ice between us and the Admiralty Island, I sought shelter under the lee of a point in latitude 69° 40'. Here our stock of provisions being low, three deer were shot.

Large flocks of geese were migrating to the S.S.W. Golden plover and other small birds appeared to take a S.E. course, possibly to visit the shores of Hudson Bay on their passage southward.

On the morning of the 16th it blew hard from N. until 9 A.M., when, the wind subsiding a little, we made another attempt to push across to Admiralty Island, but with as little success as before, there being even more ice in our way than on the preceding day.

Being unable to advance either to the northward or westward, I occupied the time in examining more closely the bay in which we now were, and which I named after his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

We steered nearly S.W. by W. (true) as soon as the ice would allow, and as the ebb tide was carrying us somewhat to the northward, we made about a W.S.W. course, and after advancing 21 miles we landed at 9h. 45m. P.M. near some limestone cliffs, on the S. shore of a long point that projects into the bay in lat.  $69^{\circ} 32' N.$ , long.  $103^{\circ} 10' W.$

During the early part of the 17th there was a thick fog, so that while coasting to the W. by N. we had to hug the shore.

At 9h. 30m., when on shore for breakfast, the weather cleared up, and excellent observations were obtained, giving lat.  $69^{\circ} 33' 5'' N.$ , long.  $103^{\circ} 33' 49'' W.$

We afterwards pulled 7 miles W. by N. (true) obliquely across a strait to a point on which I landed to take bearings and obtain a view of the coast. Land was seen all round forming a wide bay. Near us, to the E., was a deep, narrow inlet running S., which was examined. After leaving the inlet we steered S.E.  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles to a small island, where we landed to pass the night.

Our course the following morning was extremely devious, as there was so thick a fog that it was necessary to follow closely all the windings of the shore. In the forenoon and at noon our longitude was  $103^{\circ} 7' 21'' W.$ , lat.  $69^{\circ} 24' 51'' N.$  Variation of the compass  $77^{\circ} 30' E.$

The general direction of the coast afterwards for 10 miles was N.E. by N.; it then turned to E.S.E. until we arrived at the most westerly of the two islets near our position on the 7th of August. We landed on the small island for a short time, and were again afloat at 9h. 40m. P.M., when we pulled E. by S. to another island  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles off, at which we arrived a little after midnight. Here the fresh track of a large white bear was seen.

On the morning of the 19th another attempt was made to force a passage eastward, but after an advance of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles we reached the close pack, and there was no alternative but to pull back.

Having landed on one of the islands, a round of bearings was taken, after which, the wind being still from the N.E., we commenced our voyage homewards. Seeing that the ice lay close on the E. side of Taylor Island, I steered between it and Victoria Land, and found the channel dividing them open. It is about 50 yards wide and 8 feet deep at its narrowest part.

In the evening we were much annoyed by both the old and new formed ice. The latter would have speedily cut our boats through, had we persevered in pushing through it.

The morning of the 20th August being very fine and clear, land was seen in one or two directions in which it had not been previously noticed, and bearings were taken of it. The young ice did not thaw until 10h. A.M.; after which, by great perseverance,

we made very tolerable progress. Working all night, and sometimes aided by the sails, at 7h. 15m. A.M., on the 21st, we landed on the W. shore of Stromness Bay, and after staying 2 hours again pushed on; but the ice being lighter, and consequently more closely packed on the shore, we had greater difficulty in making headway, and were at last obliged to wait the rise of the tide at a point in Parker Bay.

Having remained here 3 hours, and had an interview with a party of Esquimaux, at 3h. 30m. P.M. we again commenced creeping along shore, and had proceeded but a short distance when a piece of pine-wood was picked up which excited much interest. In appearance it resembled the butt end of a small flag-staff, was 5 feet 9 inches in length, and round except 12 inches at the lower end, which was a square of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches. It had a curious mark, resembling this (s c), apparently stamped on one side, and at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet distance from the step there was a bit of white line in the form of a loop nailed on it with two copper tacks. Both the line and the tacks bore the Government mark, the broad arrow being stamped on the latter, and the former having a red worsted thread running through it.

We had not advanced  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile when another piece of wood was discovered lying in the water, but touching the beach. This was a piece of oak, 3 feet 8 inches long. The lower part, to the height of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  foot, was a square of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Half of the square, to the extent of 6 inches at the end, was cut off, apparently to fit into a clasp or band of iron, as there was a mark of 3 inches broad across it. The remaining part of the stanchion (as I suppose it to have been) had been formed in a turning-lathe, and was 3 inches in diameter.

As there may be some difference of opinion regarding the direction from which these pieces of wood came, it may not be out of place to express here my own opinion on the subject.

From the circumstance of the flood-tide coming from the northward, along the E. shore of Victoria Land, there can be no doubt but there is a water-channel dividing Victoria Land from North Somerset, and through this channel I believe these pieces of wood have been carried along with the immense quantities of ice that a long continuance of northerly and north-easterly winds, aided by the flood-tide, had driven southward. The ebb-tide not having power enough to carry it back again against the wind, the large bay immediately S. of Victoria Strait became perfectly filled with ice, even up to the S. shore of Victoria Land. Both pieces of wood appear to have come to shore about the same time, and they must have been carried in by the flood-tide that was at the time flowing on during the previous ebb; for the simple reason, that although they were touching the beach they did not rest upon it.

The spot where they were found was in lat.  $68^{\circ} 52'$  N. ; long.  $103^{\circ} 20'$  W.

All the night of the 21st we continued our course, sometimes having to cut a passage for the boats, at other times finding a channel wide enough to allow us to use the oars. On the afternoon of the 22nd, when within 4 miles of the E. point of Anderson Bay, we entered open water, and there being a fine breeze of N. wind sail was set. At 7h. 45m. P.M. we landed on Point Back, to pass the night, as the wind had fallen and the tide was against us.

The morning of the 23rd was very foggy ; but a light breeze from the S.S.E. sprang up at 4h. 25m. A.M., and we sailed and pulled along shore to the E. point of Cambridge Bay, near which we landed at 9h. 45m. Here we repaired some injury one of the boats had received, and were off again at 1h. P.M. The flood-tide being against us the most part of the distance, we did not pass the most westerly of the Finlayson Islands until 8h. 10m. P.M., and a few miles further on we landed on a rocky point to cook. After 1 hour's detention, the breeze being favourable, we continued our course, and during the night rounded Wellington Bay, which does not run nearly so far to the northward as is represented by Simpson. The nature of the ground, which is low near the sea, and high some miles inland, may have easily led to an error on Simpson's part, as he merely ran across the mouth of the bay without entering it.

As the morning of the 24th dawned, the wind which had been blowing fresh from S.E. by E. gradually increased to a gale. Reef after reef was taken in, until we were under our smallest canvas. A very heavy sea was running which washed over us now and then, from stem to stern, and bent and twisted our slight-built but fine little craft in every direction. At last the weather became so bad that I was reluctantly obliged to look out a harbour. This was dangerous work, as we had to run almost among the breakers before it was possible to see whether the place we made for would afford a shelter ; but we were fortunate, and at 9h. 30m. A.M., when 8 miles N.E. of Cape Peel, we were snugly moored in a small land-locked bay, the entrance into which was not 20 yards wide.

During the whole of the 25th there was a storm from the eastward ; but at night the wind shifted to N.N.W., with an ugly cross sea. A little after 7 A.M., on the 26th, we stood out under close-reefed foresail, and at 9 doubled Cape Peel. At 5 P.M. the wind fell and shifted round to S.W., and  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour afterwards we landed about 4 miles W. of Byron Bay. After 3 hours' rest here we rowed onwards until 10h. P.M., when the wind again favoured us, and we sailed on until the darkness of the night and the heavy

sea caused us to beach the boats. Our present position was 16 miles W. of Byron Bay.

Next day the wind being again favourable, we made a good run, and landed for the night on the S.W. shore of one of the largest of the Richardson Group, in lat.  $68^{\circ} 32' N.$ ; long.  $111^{\circ} W.$

On the 28th, when we landed for breakfast at Point Ross, some observations were obtained which verified the position previously laid down by me in the spring journey. From this place our run to the Coppermine was uninterrupted. Stopping only once to cook, we sailed all night. At 3h. 30m. A.M., on the 29th, we passed by the S. end of Douglas Island—at 5h., abreast of Cape Krusenstern—at noon, opposite Cape Kendall—and between 7 and 8 reached the Bloody Fall, not having seen a bit of ice since leaving Point Back.

Our consumption of provisions from the 20th June until this date was—

\* 4 bags pemmican, 90 lbs. each.

4½ bags flour.

150 lbs. dry meat (principally given to our dogs).

70 lbs. fat.

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About 11 pieces.

Twenty-one deer had been shot on the coast; and many more could have been killed had I permitted it.

The water being very high in the river, I remained 1 day to allow it to subside, and our time was occupied in strengthening one of the boats for the ascent of the stream. The other boat was to be left behind.

On the 31st, although the water had fallen 12 inches, it was still much above its usual level; but as I had every confidence in the skill and coolness of my men, we commenced our upward course.

I believe the Coppermine was never ascended in so dangerous a state. The ledges of rock along the base of the cliffs, which in the worst part of the river had afforded footing to Dease and Simpson's party in 1838 and 1839, were covered by water, in consequence of which the men had to walk with the tracking line along the top of the cliffs. In doing this, although the line was a strong one, it snapped four times, and other means were resorted to. After five days' most arduous and dangerous duty, during which the conduct of the party was most praiseworthy, we entered the Kendall River, and encamped on its banks.

Simpson says somewhere in his narrative that it is impracticable to take a boat across from the Kendall to Bear Lake, or *vice versâ*,

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\* Two of these being rotten and mouldy were boiled down to obtain the grease.

at any season except during the floods in spring. I was desirous of making the attempt, as by getting one of our light sea-boats into the M'Kenzie much time would be saved on the portages *en route* to Athabasca.

Now that the high-water would have been an advantage, we had the misfortune to find that it had fallen to its usual summer-level; nevertheless I determined to try the experiment, and, I am glad to say, with perfect success.

On the 5th and 6th we ascended the Kendall, and traversed the Dismal Lakes, at the north-western extremity of which we arrived about 3 P.M. on the last-mentioned day. The guide was immediately sent to find the best route to the N. branch of the Dease, whilst the remainder of the crew carried the baggage a portion of the way over the portage.

To give a detailed account of the difficulties we met with and overcame, would occupy too much space in a report like this. It is sufficient to remark that on the afternoon of the 10th September we arrived at Fort Confidence, where I found everything in good order, and more than 3000lbs. of dried provisions in store.

Having given my assistant, Mr. M'Kenzie, instructions regarding the payments to be made and the gratuities to be given to the Indians, I started at 10 P.M. on the 11th in the small boat with four men and one Indian for Fort Simpson, and arrived there on the 26th, having been impeded in the M'Kenzie River by continued head wind.

Late the next evening the large boat came up, and the party were again united.

In concluding this report, I have to express my satisfaction at the good conduct of most of my men. Two of the party, my assistant and a Canadian half-breed, did not behave well; but the others fully made up for any defects in these. Had there been a few steady European servants in this expedition, it would have been one of the most efficient that ever visited the Arctic Sea. For voyaging, either during winter or summer, no men could be better than those I had; but for several other duties they were not so well adapted as the men engaged by the Company in the Orkneys or Hebrides.

I have the honour to remain,

Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN RAE.

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